



School of Linguistics and Applied Language Studies Course Outline

LALS 517, Special topic: Sociocultural theory and second language learning, Trimester 3, 2006

1. Course Coordinator:

Dr. Merrill Swain

VZ 302

Ext. 5615

Email: mswain@oise.utoronto.ca

2. Staff: Dr. Merrill Swain

3. Class times and rooms:

4 pm to 6 pm, Wednesday 1 November to Tuesday 14 November 2006 inclusive in MY 632. The class on Tuesday 7 November will be a public lecture held in HM 105.

4. Announcements:

The MA noticeboard is in the corridor of VZ Level 2

Some additional information relevant to this course can be found in the School MA Handbook for 2006. The handbook is available on the web.

<http://www.vuw.ac.nz/lals/degrees/docs/Handbook%202006.pdf>

5. LALS main office: VZ210, 2nd floor Von Zedlitz Building, Kelburn Parade

6. Course Administrator:

Jane Dudley, Postgraduate administration Tel: 463 5600, Fax: 463 5604

Jane.Dudley@vuw.ac.nz

7. Content:

I SOCIOCULTURAL THEORY

Wednesday Nov 1st

Introductions (instructor and students)

Course outline

Key SCT concepts

Mediation (physical and semiotic)

The social origin of higher mental functions

Zone of proximal development

Internalization

Regulation

Egocentric, inner, and private speech

Genetic method

Activity Theory
Agency
Distributed cognition
Communities of Practice

II SOCIOCULTURAL THEORY AND SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNING RESEARCH

Thursday, Nov 2nd The Genetic Method

- Chapter 2 Lantolf and Thorne (2006: pp 25-58).

Friday, Nov 3rd Mediation

- Chapter 4 (pp 59-81 and pp 83-94)
- Chapter 5 (pp 137-146)

Monday, Nov 6th The Zone of Proximal Development
Scaffolding
Role of repetition
Dynamic assessment

- Chapter 10 (pp 263-290)
- Chapter 12 (pp 327-357)
- Kinginger, 2002
- DiCamilla & Anton, 1997

Tuesday, Nov 7th Public Lecture – *Languaging, agency and collaboration in second language learning*

- Chapter 6 (pp 151-178)
- Swain, 2000
- Swain, 2006

Wednesday, Nov 8th Internalization
Egocentric speech
Inner speech
Private speech
Collaborative dialogue
Role of L1

- Chapter 7 (pp 179-207)
- Ohta, 2001, Chapter 2
- Storch, 2002
- Swain & Lapkin, 2000
- Swain & Lapkin, 2002

Thursday, Nov 9th Activity Theory

- Chapter 8 (pp 209-232)
- Chapter 9 (pp 233-262)
- Coughlan & Duff, 1994

**Friday, Nov 10th
& Monday, Nov 13th** Social Construction of Self; Identity, Communities of Practice, Motivation, Emotions

- Toohey, 1996
- Miller, 2001
- Morita, 2004
- Vitanova, 2005
- Pavlenko and Lantolf, 2000

Tuesday, Nov 14th

Wrap Up.

8. Objectives: The purpose of this course is to further students' understanding of second language learning through the lens of sociocultural theory (SCT). By the end of the course students should be familiar with the concepts and principles of Vygotskian and neo-Vygotskian sociocultural theory and be able to use this to look at the second language (L2) learning processes in L2 research.

The class presentation looks at mastery of the concepts behind sociocultural theory and the assignment focuses on their application.

9. Expected workload: LALS 517 is a fifteen point one-trimester paper. Course members should expect to spend about 12 hours per week over ten weeks on all the work for this course including lectures.

10. Group work:

See points 2 and 3 in the Assessment requirements below.

11. Readings: The set text is Lantolf, J.P. and Thorne, S.L. (2006). *Sociocultural Theory and the Genesis of Second Language Development*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

12. Materials and equipment:

Readings can be found on the Knowledge forum at http://online.oise.utoronto.ca/webkf/lals517_f06ms.html

13. Assessment requirements:

There are three pieces of assessment.

Oral presentation	by 14 November	20%	
Active participation		20%	
Assignment	19 January 2007	60%	(3,500 words)

1. Students are expected to complete the readings from the textbook assigned for each day prior to the class for which they are assigned.
2. Students, working in groups of three or four outside of class time, will tape-record their discussion of an article (to be assigned/chosen) which they will present during the course. These tapes will form part of the data for your collaboratively produced term paper. Groups will be formed, with input from the students, by the end of the second class session.
3. Beginning November 8th, each group will be responsible for the presentation of an article from the items listed in the course syllabus. Each group will give a brief summary of the article and initiate and lead a discussion on it. The presentation and discussion should last approximately 30 minutes. (20% of your final grade).
4. A 'knowledge forum' (KF) conference will be available for students to initiate and engage in discussion about course content that we do not have time to consider in class, or that in-class discussion has left you with additional questions and thoughts that need airing. Students are encouraged to participate in these discussions as a means of community-building and knowledge (re)construction.
http://online.oise.utoronto.ca/webkf/lals517_f06ms.html
5. Active participation in class and on the KF is expected of all students (approximately 20% of your final grade).

6. A term paper. This paper will be completed by students working in groups (the same groups as in #2 and #3 above). In this paper, you will analyze an aspect of your learning within an SCT framework using the tapes, computer interactions, and self-observations as data. A not unreasonable goal would be the preparation of a publishable paper for a professional L2-related journal. (60% of your final grade). On the next page, some of the topics that previous students in this course have written on are listed.

GRADING:

A: original work, very well organized and expressed, sound critical evaluations, clear command of techniques and principles of the discipline, etc.

B: good grasp of the topics, accurate knowledge, some evidence of critical evaluation, ability to synthesize and to discriminate relevant issues, etc.

D or E: glaring inaccuracy and confusion, little or no grasp of techniques and principles, trivial and irrelevant treatment of topics; in general, a failure to demonstrate the minimal knowledge and skills for effective work in the discipline.

For purposes of the term paper, this can be "translated" as:

A: Publishable paper in a professional journal: A+ as is; A with minor modifications; A- with necessary modifications.

B: Adequate paper: B+ competent but with obvious limitations; B competent but with obvious problems or gaps; B- barely competent.

D or E: Inadequate paper.

DEADLINES: The term paper is due January 19, 2007

14. Penalties: Assignments and tasks must be submitted by the due date. There is no penalty for late submission but permission must be sought and a good reason given. Try to keep within the word limits especially for the tasks. Assignments and tasks which are plagiarised will not receive a grade and cannot be resubmitted.

15. Responsibilities for practicum arrangements (practicum courses only):

This course does not involve a practicum.

16. Mandatory Course Requirements (Terms): There are minimum course requirements which must be satisfied to be assessed for the final grade. In order to meet these requirements, course members must

take an active role in class

do the oral presentation

attend all the ten classes

complete the assignment.

17. Communication of additional information:

Additional information about the course will be communicated in class or by e-mail.

General University policies and statutes

Students should familiarise themselves with the University's policies and statutes, particularly the Assessment Statute, the Personal Courses of Study Statute, the Statute on Student Conduct and any statutes relating to the particular qualifications being studied; see the Victoria University Calendar available in hard copy or under 'About Victoria' on the VUW home page at www.vuw.ac.nz.

Student and staff conduct

The Statute on Student Conduct together with the Policy on Staff Conduct ensure that members of the University community are able to work, learn, study and participate in the academic and social aspects of the University's life in an atmosphere of safety and respect. The Statute on Student Conduct contains information on what conduct is prohibited and what steps are to be taken if there is a complaint. For information about complaint procedures under the Statute on Student Conduct, contact the Facilitator and Disputes Advisor or refer to the statute on the VUW policy website at:

www.vuw.ac.nz/policy/studentconduct

The Policy on Staff Conduct can be found on the VUW website at:

www.vuw.ac.nz/policy/staffconduct

Academic grievances

If you have any academic problems with your course you should talk to the tutor or lecturer concerned; class representatives may be able to help you in this. If you are not satisfied with the result of that meeting, see the Head of School or the relevant Associate Dean; VUWSA Education Coordinators are available to assist in this process. If, after trying the above channels, you are still unsatisfied, formal grievance procedures can be invoked. These are set out in the Academic Grievance Policy which is published on the VUW website at:

www.vuw.ac.nz/policy/academicgrievances

Academic integrity and plagiarism

Academic integrity is about honesty – put simply it means *no cheating*. All members of the University community are responsible for upholding academic integrity, which means staff and students are expected to behave honestly, fairly and with respect for others at all times.

Plagiarism is a form of cheating which undermines academic integrity. The University defines plagiarism as follows:

The presentation of the work of another person or other persons as if it were one's own, whether intended or not. This includes published or unpublished work, material on the Internet and the work of other students or staff.

It is still plagiarism even if you re-structure the material or present it in your own style or words.

Note: It is however, perfectly acceptable to include the work of others as long as that is acknowledged by appropriate referencing.

Plagiarism is prohibited at Victoria and is not worth the risk. Any enrolled student found guilty of plagiarism will be subject to disciplinary procedures under the Statute on Student Conduct and may be penalized severely. Consequences of being found guilty of plagiarism can include:

- an oral or written warning
- cancellation of your mark for an assessment or a fail grade for the course
- suspension from the course or the University.

Find out more about plagiarism, and how to avoid it, on the University's website:

www.vuw.ac.nz/home/studying/plagiarism.html

Students with Impairments (see Appendix 3 of the Assessment Handbook)

The University has a policy of reasonable accommodation of the needs of students with disabilities. The policy aims to give students with disabilities the same opportunity as other students to demonstrate their abilities. If you have a disability, impairment or chronic medical condition (temporary, permanent or recurring) that may impact on your ability to participate, learn and/or achieve in lectures and tutorials or in meeting the course requirements, please contact the course coordinator as early in the course as possible. Alternatively, you may wish to approach a Student Adviser from Disability Support Services (DSS) to discuss your individual needs and the available options and support on a confidential basis. DSS are located on Level 1, Robert Stout Building:

Telephone: 463-6070
Email: disability@vuw.ac.nz

The School's Disability Liaison Person for 2006 is Dr Dianne Bardsley, ext 5644, email Dianne.Bardsley@vuw.ac.nz.

Student Support

Staff at Victoria want students to have positive learning experiences at the University. Each faculty has a designated staff member who can either help you directly if your academic progress is causing you concern, or quickly put you in contact with someone who can. In the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences the support contact is **Dr Allison Kirkman, Murphy Building, room 407**. Assistance for specific groups is also available from the Kaiwawao Maori, Manaaki Pihipihinga or Victoria International.

In addition, the Student Services Group (email: student-services@vuw.ac.nz) is available to provide a variety of support and services. Find out more at:

www.vuw.ac.nz/st_services/

VUWSA employs Education Coordinators who deal with academic problems and provide support, advice and advocacy services, as well as organising class representatives and faculty delegates. The Education Office (tel. 463-6983 or 463-6984, email at education@vuwsa.org.nz) is located on the ground floor, Student Union Building.